



OSHA Requirements Related to Emergencies

Emergency responder health and safety is currently regulated primarily under the following Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards.

- Exit routes, emergency action plans, and fire prevention plans (29 CFR 1910.33-1910.39)
- Fire brigades (29 CFR 1910.156)
- Hazardous waste operations and emergency response (29 CFR 1910.120)
- Respiratory protection (29 CFR 1910.134)
- Permit-required confined spaces (29 CFR 1910.146)
- Bloodborne pathogens (29 CFR 1910.1030)



Some of these standards were promulgated decades ago and none were designed as comprehensive emergency response standards. Consequently, they do not address the full range of hazards or concerns currently facing emergency responders. Also, this list of OSHA requirements does not address every emergency-related issue that may affect your workplace.

- Many do not reflect major changes in performance specifications for protective clothing and equipment.
- Current OSHA standards also do not reflect all the major developments in safety and health practices that have already been accepted by the emergency response community and incorporated into National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and American National Standards Institute (ANSI) consensus standards.

An emergency response plan should be developed locally and should be comprehensive enough to deal with all types of emergencies specific to that facility.

When emergency action plans are required by a particular OSHA standard, the plan must be in writing; except for firms with 10 or fewer employees, the plan may be communicated orally to employees.
